

## Getting a License if you are an out of state peace officer

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) welcomes law enforcement officers from other areas considering a career move to Texas. Please carefully review the “Out of State/Federal Application” found under the Forms and Applications section of our website.

You must meet ALL of the work, training and application requirements. You will be required to complete an initial application, including fingerprints through FAST, to determine your eligibility. Please do not proceed to next steps until your eligibility has been approved. If you are approved, you will receive further instructions by mail. Please allow two weeks for TCOLE to review your initial application.

In order to become licensed as a peace officer in Texas, you must meet the minimum standards for initial licensure (§217.1.) and complete the following steps:

1. Approval of the initial eligibility form;
2. successful completion of the Texas Supplemental Peace Officer course (instructions provided with eligibility approval);
3. Approval of the exam application, and receive endorsement from TCOLE (exam application provided only when eligibility is approved);
4. passing of the state licensing examination; and
5. appointment by a law enforcement agency within two years from the date of your passed examination.

The examination endorsement, issued by TCOLE, allows three attempts that must be completed within 180 days from issuance. The Texas basic licensing course must be completed if:

- the initial application for eligibility is not approved; or
- the examinee fails all three attempts to pass the licensing exam; or
- the examinee fails to complete all three attempts within 180 days from the completion date of the licensing course; or
- the examinee is dismissed from an exam for cheating. If dismissed from an exam for cheating, all remaining attempts are invalidated.

Please contact our staff for any questions or clarification regarding the documentation that must be submitted with the eligibility form. **Do not make assumptions you will be accepted until your eligibility has been approved.**

## Work and Basic Training Requirements

### Work History

Applicant must have honorably served (employed, benefits eligible) as a sworn full time paid peace officer for 2 continuous years within the 4 years prior to application. Service time applied to this section must have been obtained following completion of a state POST approved basic training course.

### Training Requirements

TCOLE uses the number of hours in our basic peace officer training course to determine the minimum amount of hours for equivalency. The chart below identifies the hourly requirements.

Years	Texas Hours	Minimum Hours Accepted
<b>9/01/1970 – 12/31/1972</b>	140	112
<b>1/01/1973 – 12/31/1980</b>	240	192
<b>1/01/1981 – 8/31/1985</b>	320	256
<b>9/01/1985 – 8/31/1994</b>	400	320
<b>9/01/1994 – 12/31/2001</b>	560	448
<b>1/01/2002 – 12/31/2004</b>	576	461
<b>1/01/2005 – 12/31/2012</b>	618	494
<b>1/01/2013 – current</b>	643	514

Before individuals with federal credentials or out-of-state license(s) may attempt the licensing exam, they must meet all of the statutory licensing requirements of the State of Texas and the rules of the Commission

U.S. citizenship is a requirement to be licensed as a peace officer in Texas.  
(Commission Rule (§217.1(a)(18))

All applicants will be subject to a search through the National Decertification Database (NDD), NCIC/TCIC, and National Criminal History Databases to establish eligibility.

### Qualifying Federal Departments

The Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, § 2.122, recognizes specific criminal investigators of the United States as having authority to enforce selected state laws by virtue of their authority. Prior training will be evaluated and approved by the Commission to insure it meets current training requirements.

- (1) Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;
- (2) Special Agents of the Secret Service;
- (3) Special Agents of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement;

- (4) Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives;
- (5) Special Agents of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration;
- (6) Inspectors of the United States Postal Inspection Service;
- (7) Special Agents of the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service;
- (8) Civilian Special Agents of the United States Naval Criminal Investigative Service;
- (9) Marshals and Deputy Marshals of the United States Marshals Service;
- (10) Special Agents of the United States Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security;
- (11) Special Agents of the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration;
- (12) Special Agents of the Office of Inspector General of the United States Social Security Administration;
- (13) Special Agents of the Office of Inspector General of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs;
- (14) A person designated as a Special Policeman by the Federal Protective Service of the General Services Administration under 40 U.S.C. Section 318 or 318d;
- (15) A Customs and Border Protection Officer or Border Patrol Agent of the United States Customs and Border Protection or an immigration enforcement agent, or deportation officer of the Department of Homeland Security;
- (16) A commissioned law enforcement officer of the National Parks Service;
- (17) A Special Agent or Law Enforcement Officer of the United States Forest Service; and
- (18) Security personnel working at a commercial nuclear power plant, including contract security personnel, trained and qualified under a security plan approved by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

### **Federal Officers must**

- 1. successfully complete an approved Federal Agency Law Enforcement training course (equivalent course topics and hours);
- 2. be subject to continued employment or eligible for re-hire (excluding retirement);
- 3. have honorably served (employed, benefits eligible) in one of the aforementioned federal full time paid capacities for 2 continuous years within the 4 years prior to application. Service time applied to this section must have been obtained following completion of a federal agency law enforcement approved basic training course; and
- 4. have a copy of all their military discharge(s) (DD-214) (if applicable); and
- 5. have a current fingerprint return on file with FAST.

## Individuals from other U.S. states must

1. provide proof of successful completion of a state POST-approved (or state licensing authority) basic police officer training academy with equivalent course topics and hours of training at the time of initial certification or licensure;
2. have honorably served (employed, benefits eligible) as a sworn full time paid peace officer for 2 continuous years within the 4 years prior to application. Service time applied to this section must have been obtained following completion of a state POST approved basic training course;
3. be subject to continued employment or eligible for re-hire (excluding retirement);
4. the applicant's license or certificate must never have been, nor currently be in the process of being, surrendered, suspended, or revoked; and
5. have a copy of all their military discharge(s) (DD-214) (if applicable). Individual has never received a dishonorable or other discharge based on misconduct barring future military service, Commission Rule 217.1(a)(13).

## Required Documents to Accompany the Application

1. A certified or notarized copy of the basic training certificate for a police officer with hours listed. If hours are not listed on the certificate, documentation of hours completed must accompany the certificate (Reserve, part time, or auxiliary training is not accepted);
2. A certified or notarized copy of a Federal Agent's License or Credentials; or a certified or notarized copy of the police officer license or certificate issued by the state POST;
3. A notarized statement from the state POST, current or previous employing agency(s), or federal employing agency revealing any disciplinary action(s) that may have been taken against any license or certificate issued by that agency or any pending action; or that no disciplinary action has been taken at any time on your license or certification;
4. A notarized statement from your employing agency(s) confirming **full time service** as a peace officer, federal officer or agent. Exact service dates are required. (Reserve or auxiliary peace officer training is not accepted; probationary officer time prior to completion of an approved basic police officer training academy is not accepted);
5. A certified or notarized copy of your valid state-issued driver's license; and
6. A copy of all your military discharge(s) (DD-214) (if applicable).

The Commission may request that applicants submit a copy of the Basic and Advanced Training Curriculum for equivalency evaluation and final approval.

## **Preparation for the Licensing Examination**

The latest “Texas” editions of the following references are suggested reading.

1. Code of Criminal Procedure
2. Penal Code
3. Transportation Code
4. Alcoholic Beverage Code
5. Health and Safety Code
6. Family Code

Texas statutes can be found online at [www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us).

## **Possible sources for the reference material**

Public libraries

College bookstores

West Publications (800) 328-9352

Sterling Publications (210) 438-7110

Lexis-Nexis (800) 833-9844

Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (512) 320-8274

## **Testing information**

A list of test sites can be found on our website at [www.TCOLE.Texas.gov](http://www.TCOLE.Texas.gov). Contact the test site to schedule an exam, directions to site, any exam fee and method of payment.

You will not be allowed to attempt the exam without a state or federal photo ID.

If you have any questions, please call (512) 936-7700.